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ABSTRACT

This consultant paper for a war/peace curriculum development project is concerned with the challenge of preparing members of our society for a more rational approach to problems of inter-nation conflict. The nature of conflict and conflict solution in relation to the experience of learning are emphasized. Topics discussed include: 1) effect of physical environment upon evolution of man; 2) aggression, and human behavior; 3) psychological processes and values; and, 4) war as a social institution. The characteristics of human reaction to this fear are explored, such as dehumanization, alienation, and social involvement. Also discussed are: 1) unconscious defense mechanisms; 2) intra- and inter-group conflict; 3) socio-economic and political forces; 4) ethnocentrism; and, 5) communication problems. Guidelines suggest teaching these concepts: 1) idea of a world in which conflict, but not inevitably war, will continue to exist; 2) alternatives to violence are available as outcomes of conflict situations; 3) conflict can function as a creative force; and, 4) there is a need for new institutions for the conduct of conflict and the control of violence. A bibliography of 24 books and articles is appended as well as a list of 9 additional reference sources. Other consultant papers in this Inquiry session are SO 001 262 through SO 001 265. Related documents in this curriculum development project are SO 001 259 through SO 001 267. (Author/JSB)

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TEACHING ABOUT CONFLICT AS IT RELATES TO WAR

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The concept of a world without war has unfortunately been envisioned in the minds of many among us as a world in which the struggle between nation groups would cease. We have naively embarked upon two major efforts at world organization bereft of the power of a system of world law and its enforcement. The decisions of nation governments, meanwhile, remain influenced more often by the complex interaction of or expedient response to political considerations, than by policies aimed at the achievement of a world community of interests. It is the declared aim of American government policy,[1,2] supported by the vast majority of our citizens, that we seek the establishment of world order and freedom from war. Yet the conflicting views in our own nation regarding means for attainment of these goals should alert us to expect the continuing presence of much broader areas of conflict between ourselves and other national groups.

Indeed, such is the case. Yet the viewpoint of most Americans continues to be governed by an expectation that <u>whenever</u> conflicts of interest occur, we must be <u>right</u> and we must <u>win</u>. Arnold Toynbee,[3] the English historian, has suggested that American Nationalism has not only become equated with patriotism, but an ideology replacing religion in the lives of many U.S. citizens. In this view righteousness and unreasoning fervor, a "militant enthusiasm"* in pursuit of predetermined goals, characterizes our response

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*Konrad Lorenz' term; see below.

to the presence of international conflict.

In none of the respects noted above are we prepared as a citizenry to anticipate and to tolerate without ultimate resort to war the persistent dilemmas in the management of world affairs generated by the continuing presence of conflicts of interest. Nor does our approach to human affairs indicate an understanding of the nature of conflict itself as a force in human experience. Much of man's inner life experience is one of conflicting wish and fear or conviction and doubt. Ambivalent feelings and opposing ideas, intents, and interests produce internal conflict within the individual, just as such differences result in conflict between individuals or groups. Conflict itself results in anxiety or tension which always demands some outlet for expression. When the source of tension is consciously recognized, and the individual (or group) feels sufficiently free, the tension may be verbally identified and the associated emotions expressed as feeling. More commonly, particularly when the conflict results in very threatening anxiety, the source of tension and especially the feeling content, or affect, may remain unconscious. In fact much of human behavior may be seen as an attempt to adapt to conflict, the roots of which remain concealed from awareness. This effort often serves more as a defense against overwhelming anxiety than as an effective response to the external situation stimulating conflict.

Meeting the challenge posed for the educator hoping to prepare members of our society for a more rational approach to problems of inter-nation conflict requires further understanding of man himself, his organized society, his characteristic reaction to fear, and his problems in managing conflict. It must include recognition of the ways in which conflict manifests itself, both in feelings and in responsive behavior, as well as those

characteristic means available by which the individual may deal with conflict-laden situations. The educator will need to recognize the complexities that differentiate the response to inter-group or inter-nation conflict from that of the intra-personal or inter-personal conflict situation. Ultimately, we must recognize those ways in which the teacher must come to terms with the conflictual forces within the immediate community of the educational setting and their effect upon him, the individual teacher.

Delineating the need for this understanding leads rather naturally to observations about learning, and the questions, "What kind of learning needs to take place?" and "How can such a learning process be fostered?" Teachers will readily recognize the extent to which students' intellectual grasp of factual information alone may leave them unprepared to utilize and apply that learning to problem solving situations. We have already pointed to several of the many ways in which our national attitudes and behavior remain in conflict with reality (or "facts"). Repeatedly we encounter an intellectual consensus with violent disagreement about the perception of conditions necessary for attainment of the chosen goal.

The experience of learning is intimately tied to the experience of living with those important persons who influence early events and encounters. Those persons include teachers as well as parents and siblings. The capacity to accept and to manage conflict can only be developed by each individual through actual experience and by example with important models for identification.

We are talking about experiential learning which results in the development of judicious values arrived at with emotional conviction. Frank Barron, as a result of his work at the University of California, Berkeley, has characterized as most creative those persons who are best able to deal

with incongruity and dissonance.[4] Barron observes that such persons do not become anxious when confronted by these conflict-producing phenomena, but manage to live with the contradictions with confidence until rational solutions can be found.

It is the latter capacity, all the more urgent at this time in our society, that we must strive to develop in our children. Such learning hopefully may lead as well to the capacity for dealing with one's own emotional life with self-awareness and the realistic rather than the anxious appraisal of danger. It is Erik Erikson who in Childhood and Society has written most cogently about the manner in which the learning experience of childhood profoundly influences man's individual life and his evolving society; by preparing our children to accept new concepts about life among men, we influence the future of our society. Erikson writes:

> Judiciousness in its widest sense is a frame of mind which is tolerant of differences, cautious and methodical in evaluation, just in judgment, circumspect in action, and--in spite of all this apparent relativism--capable of faith and indignation. Its opposite is prejudice, an outlook characterized by prejudged values and dogmatic divisions; here everything seems to be clearly delineated and compartmentalized, and this by 'nature,' wherefore it must stay forever the way it always has been.[5]

And later:

> Men of good will must learn to fear accurately and to cope judiciously with the anxiety aroused by the renunciation of prejudice. Enlightenment has done the groundwork; new forms of communication must cement the foundation; society must provide the structure.[6]

In our presentation we hope to share the enlightenment of psychoanalytic insights to which Erikson refers and to formulate more explicitly as they concern teaching those educational goals which evolve from concerns

shared with him both about the learning process and about the future of mankind, presently threatened by nuclear war. As background in this effort we will consider briefly several observations about additional factors influencing the nature of man and his evolving social institutions.

The influence of physical environment upon the evolution of man has been immense. Particularly have man's views of his own autonomy versus supernatural determinants in man's affairs been influenced by the great natural catastrophes of history. Traditionally, man has viewed these events as governed by the gods who in turn have been identified as or associated with the heavens, the stars, and the planets. The threat posed by catastrophic floods, worldwide earthquakes, and shifts of land, ice, and sea with atmospheric and weather changes, have regularly been accompanied by violent conflict among men. Examples may be found in the history of the Jews at the time of and in the period following the Exodus, and in the history of the Trojan Wars of Greece.

How often and how recently has man been threatened by the massive destructive forces of nature?* Certainly man's awe of the extended environment of our universe, and of the impact of nature's forces, has greatly influenced his development, his behavior, and his ideologies. Now man himself has developed the capacity to explore this universe, to more nearly harness nature, and himself to generate great thermonuclear destructive force. We are now justifiably afraid and in deep dissent, but this time of man's, rather than God's, wrathful power.

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*The work of Immanuel Velikovsky[7,8] has brilliantly challenged our accepted view of the solar system, offering documentation in the records of both man and nature that support revision of presently accepted theories of the history of our Earth, of the time-table of history, and of Darwin's theory of evolution. However, an exposition of the controversy introduced by Velikovsky goes far beyond the scope of this presentation.

We need very much then to concern ourselves with what we know of man's control over that tendency among men to resort to violence. Among ethologists, those studying the biology of animal behavior, Konrad Lorenz, most notably in his book, On Aggression,[9] has presented a fascinating synthesis of data demonstrating the phylogenetic determinants (that is, developed in the course of biological evolution) of man's behavior as a social animal. Lorenz emphasizes instinctual protection of territorial rights as governing man's aggression against man. He describes parallels to that of man in the individual and social aggressive behavior not only of lesser primates but of still "lower" animal societies. From this view, one may consider the manner in which instinctive modes and rituals providing systems of control governing man's conduct and the institutions of man's society can be seen as imprinted, or "phylogenetically programmed," in the course of evolution. In contrast to lesser species, however, man has not developed controls to check man's intraspecific aggression against man, short of killing and warfare. Lorenz sees man's present dilemma as developing from the failure of our culture to provide ritual or institutional controls of aggression while the basic instinctual function of aggression has become distorted in a manner now maladaptive for survival. He stresses the interrelationship between man's biological evolution, his psychology, and his culture.

Clifford Geertz, an anthropologist, in discussing the impact of the concept of culture on the concept of man,[10] writes:

> Seen as a set of symbolic devices for controlling behavior, culture provides the link between what men are intrinsically capable of becoming and what they actually in fact become. To become human is to become an individual, and we become individual under the guidance of cultural patterns, systems of meaning which give form, order, point, and direction to our lives.

Social organization may be seen as both a result of and a powerful additional force in the interplay of psychological process, biological evolution, and cultural patterning. Among those institutions of society which include systems of government, law, commerce, ideology, etc. must be included that of war. As a social institution for dealing with major conflict, war demands acts of aggression committed in the service of ideals and symbols. These may have little to do with individual or even group self-preservation and self-defense. Thus while we may accept the idea that human aggressive and destructive tendencies exist, the social function of war may be paramount.

Karl W. Deutsch, a political scientist at Yale University, has recently described seven basic images of war held by man,[11] some of which have persisted for thousands of years. These images have become enmeshed or have been evoked variously in pursuit of social goals involving conflict and power. In brief, they are:

1. War seen as a basic and periodic necessity in response to natural law and the process of natural selection--a kind of fatalism.
2. Christian concepts of human weakness and the limited or just and holy war (Crusades).
3. War as a rational last resort in the settlement of disputes--the prerogative of kings.
4. The optimistic view that war, while presently necessary, will become obsolete and disappear as man becomes somehow more humane, a view of humanistic philosophers.
5. War as a transitory historical necessity, a view characterizing Marxism.

6. The Holy War as the last fight of good against evil--the Armageddon following which evil forces will be vanquished forever (World War II).

7. War as a failure of control.

Deutsch's first six images of war may be seen as ways in which the acceptance of war by society has been justified or rationalized. The question now posed is whether, with the advent of thermonuclear warfare, war can be tolerated by any justification as an instrument of society. In Deutsch's final view war is seen as occurring when control systems fail around crucial interactions within an interdependent social system and violent conflict follows. In this case our question is academic. The potentialities for an unplanned failure of both personnel and technical control systems in our present balance of power based on deterrence have been popularly dramatized in such works as "Dr. Strangelove"[12] and "Fail Safe."[13] The unacceptable inadequacy of Civil Defense should have been brought home by Herman Kahn who has led us to Thinking About the Unthinkable.[14]

Before considering further the implications of these concepts of war applied to man's present dilemma, we need to return to a more detailed analysis of man's individual and group psychology as it involves response to conflict and conflict-management. In doing so, we are particularly indebted to the distinguished group of psychiatrists comprising the Social Issues Committee of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry who published in 1964 Psychiatric Aspects of the Prevention of Nuclear War.[15]

Implicit in our understanding of present day society is the presence of an overwhelming sense of danger to which human beings characteristically react with fear. Fear as a signal of danger is both appropriate and necessary for mobilization of a response. In other words, the absence of fear,

or complacency in the presence of danger, can be harmful. However, it is not our fear, but our conflicted response to fear that results in irrational and often self-defeating behavior. We have already quoted Erikson's lucid statement enunciating the need for an accurate, judicial appraisal of fear as against the potentially destructive, anxiety-laden derivatives of conflict. We have also described the manner in which anxious persons seldom remain objective, their response complicated by alterations of perception and interpretation of the stimulus prompting fear. Both the latter are influenced by the previous experience of the individual and by distortions as a result of fantasy. In addition, prolonged or intense fear can have one or several deteriorating effects. For instance, the anxiety aroused may lead to a more primitive reaction; that is, one less sophisticated and knowledgable, based upon more basic or crude responses which may be lacking in reasoning and judgment. In the rush to action generated by such anxiety, more subtle or constructive capacities for adaptation may be lost. Conversely, the response may be one of increasing inaction, or functional paralysis, in the face of overwhelming stimuli. Also characteristic of such anxious states of fear is the loss of time perspective, with short term relief superseding more long term objectives.

Specifically in relation to nuclear warfare, our language is inadequate in conceptualizing and conveying the enormity of the danger to be feared. By its extraordinary magnitude, the impact of a nuclear holocaust is unimaginable and therefore, beyond emotional comprehension. While we generally respond with compassion to individual human suffering, we find little meaning in the statistics of casualties in the millions. For these among other reasons, we tend unconsciously to react in certain particular ways to the anxiety generated by the threat of present-day warfare. Among

those other mechanisms, important is that of denial. Denial means one of varying degrees of non-perception or non-recognition of certain realities, in order to avoid overwhelming anxiety. When the content of the reality is acknowledged, but the appropriately responsive feelings are denied, we refer to the mechanism of emotional isolation. Under the continuous impact of catastrophe or destruction, one may gradually become accustomed to events or scenes ordinarily very disturbing, thus reaching a state of adaptation or habituation to disaster.

One characteristic of individuals involved in a massive institutional process may be the development of a sense of distance, detachment, and the impersonal as against individualized, empathic, and compassionate or deeply personal involvement. When this develops unconsciously in response to anxiety and fear, certain alien individuals or groups may become viewed as not quite human, and therefore insignificant; or they may be seen as sub-humanly bad, though paradoxically, superhumanly malevolent. We call this response dehumanization. Its effect may lead to attitudes of indiffernece, and to the absence of guilt over behavior toward the dehumanized objects. One thus becomes similarly dehumanized in denying one's own personal responsibility and in losing a sense of involvement in the well-being of society as a whole.*

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*As defined in Psychiatric Aspects of the Prevention of Nuclear War, dehumanization is seen as adaptive and essential to the mastery of certain institutional tasks requiring ". . . the elimination, at least temporarily, of those human affective exchanges that are not central to the task at hand."[16] We would instead view the capacity of certain rescue workers, law enforcement officers, and physicians treating disaster victims as sustained by a sense of immediate personal responsibility and humanitarian effort transcending personal emotional response to suffering. Such personnel frequently collapse physically or develop severe anxiety when the immediate stress is past.

As we struggle with new features of time, space, speed, and magnitude we may find all too tempting the pre-occupation with procedure, regulations, and global planning at the expense of meeting human needs, including that of survival. With enormous power for the fate of the world in the hands of a few heads of state and at the same time the long term implications of our technology: specialization, collectivization, bureaucratization, and automation, it is difficult to remain free of feelings of anonymity, helplessness, and lack of personal involvement. These feelings foster the process of dehumanization. Dehumanization as a defense against guilt, shame, fear, and external stress may be most maladaptive to the extent that it reduces anxiety which, if present in awareness, would force the acknowledgment of conflict. The latter in turn might make possible active efforts to alter the conflict situation, a process we will discuss later.

In view of the multiplicity of the unconscious mechanisms influencing the motivation of most responses in most people, behavior can rarely be truly objective. The conflicted individual's descriptions of his own feelings may be characterized by rationalizations, displacements, distortions of many kinds, or by denial that conflict exists. He may externalize the source of conflict. In his response he may be reacting to but unaware of fantasy experience or of memories of past experience.

In a broad and condensed way we have described certain characteristics, regarding them as universal, of the response of human beings to the fear engendered by the threat of nuclear war. We have elaborated upon the influence of the unconscious defense mechanisms mobilized by anxiety engendered by the conflict-laden response to this threat, relating them to the more general experience of intrapsychic conflict. We have dealt with matters of intra- and intergroup conflict, for the most part thus far, as

if the latter were merely an aggregate or composite tension force dependent upon the sum of interacting conflicted individuals. Certainly we recognize the mechanisms for defending against anxiety such as denial, dehumanization, displacement, distortion, etc., as shared reactions within groups, and even as mass defense reactions.

However, there are clearly additional factors impinging upon group response to conflict as well as forces within group interaction which generate further intra- and intergroup conflict. Among the former are those historical, cultural, and ideological antecedents differing for each group and for individual group members which may greatly influence current attitudes. These attitudes may have little to do with conditions bearing on present conflict. Nevertheless they may sharply affect both the capacity to meet conflict situations and the particular defenses mobilized by the group. Group interaction itself contributes socio-economic and political forces which may not only provide additional stimuli to conflict but hindrances as well as strengths to the capacity for conflict management.

Certain perceptual distortions are particularly common among group members involved in inter-group conflict situations evoking fear, anger, or envy. We speak of the tendency to see things from the viewpoint of one's own group as "ethnocentric." Pressure to conform to group standards or choices is widespread and pervasive. It can be observed, and validated by behavioral research, that individual deviation from group standards very consistently raises doubts about one's own judgment. Conversely, when even a very small minority shares one's own view, independent judgment finds strong support.

The psychological comfort (that is, the avoidance of conflict and anxiety) of both individual and group requires maintenance of an established

equilibrium in attitudes and interaction which fits preconceived, usually unconscious, expectations. In this one recognizes strongly the influence of culture and historical precedent as well as individual and group learning. Communication within and between groups may be unconsciously distorted in the service of maintaining this homeostasis, as well as for the more obviously manipulative, consciously-driven control of news media we recognize in propaganda. One aspect of this process is the over-simplification of news, reinforced and further distorted by each link in the chain of communication. Selective reporting may occur also in efforts to emphasize the dramatic, in those unconscious selections of memory influenced by the reporter's preconceptions, and by purposeful conformity by the reporter to group preconceptions.

The mutual distrust that grows in an atmosphere clouded by anxiety generated by conflict, and burdened by the resulting distorted perceptions and skewed communication between groups, encourages a stereotyped exaggeration of differences and a minimizing of similarities between opposing groups or nations. One's own or the group's more unacceptable impulses or goals become easily projected upon the dehumanized "enemy." Such stereotypy and polarity characterizes right and left wing elements in our own political arena, whereas many of us may see equivalent dangers in the methods or goals of each extreme. The polarity of perceptions about capitalist versus communist sociopolitical systems seldom permits recognition of shared characteristics or goals.

Meanwhile the concept of mutual deterrence is based upon mutual fear. We may wisely question the basis upon which such fear can be steadfastly distinguished from proliferating anxiety. The concept of civil defense involves an acceptance of nuclear war as an eventuality with consequent

dulling of efforts toward acceptable alternatives. While the magnitude of their responsibility may have a tempering effect upon the behavior of group leaders, the widely divergent positions of participants in intra-group conflict may hamper the freedom of leadership to evolve a peaceful adaptation to the conflict situation. The failure of control mechanisms under conditions of armed distrust has already been described as a major threat to peace in our present world "balance of power."

It is hardly satisfying to dismiss such major policy concepts and other forces within our society with a few words. An understanding of the full complexity of the factors influencing international conflict and the multiple dilemmas in its management would also include much greater consideration of the effects of the many political, social, economic, and military forces at work. We must presume upon their inclusion elsewhere in the workshop program, instead returning to focus upon those directions toward change that may be derived from applying our observations about conflict and its effects.

We have seen the development of man's thinking--his concepts about himself, his fellow man, and the environment--as a slowly evolving and complex process. We have emphasized those unconscious mechanisms influencing the individual's response to conflict and fear which affect both individual and group behavior. We have viewed war as an institution of society, accepted throughout history on the basis of multiple rationales arising from varying ideologies or power positions. With the advent of thermonuclear power, war as an ultimate means for dealing with major world conflict can no longer be accepted. This is supported both by recognition, insofar as such recognition is psychologically available to us, of the enormous destruction wrought by thermonuclear weapons;

and equally by the psychologically destructive effect upon man of the conflicted reaction to fear of nuclear war.

In view of what we know of man's nature and his society, we must accept the continued presence of conflict among men while rejecting war as an instrument of society. The achievement of such a goal involves a fundamental change in man's thinking about the acceptance and conduct of conflict. It requires a structure within society for the instrumentality of those means for the management of conflict we know and may yet devise. These needs were recognized first by the nuclear scientists themselves.[17] They were posed in psychoanalytic terms by Erikson in Childhood and Society in 1950. They were restated and extended by Hume and Bondurant in 1964,[18] who emphasized the need for constructive and creative techniques for engaging in conflict.

We may justifiably concern ourselves with the enormity of the task which asks for alteration of society's institutions for conflict management and those conclusions man has reached for himself about conflict and the use of violent aggression in the form of war. In our necessity to aspire to that goal, we might recognize those assets available with increasing knowledge and experience about the creative uses of conflict, and about the learning process in man that may lead to altered adaptation.

There has been a strong tendency to regard all conflict as evil, hence a force to be irradicated rather than managed. Yet much of man's progress toward freedom and well-being may be seen as an outgrowth of conflict. In our present domestic society we may recognize the manner in which racial tension has served to force the growth of institutions for the mediation of conflict and correction of injustice. The crises in

conflict situations force opponents into vigorous contact with each other. Characteristically groups show integrative tendencies under external stress, moving toward mastery of the presumed danger.

Lewis Coser in his book The Functions of Social Conflict[19] lucidly examines social conflict with emphasis on its positive and corrective values for society. Coser points out that the amount of conflict accepted by a given group or segment of society may be a measure of the strength of the group or of the relationships involved.

Opposing sides in controversy may test the validity of points at issue, may alter management of relevant affairs, may uncover present attitudes including unrecognized bias, and may move toward mastery of the irrational components in the group's response to conflict. The threat posed by world-wide conflict can be demonstrated to have influenced rapid advance in various phases of our technology such as the exploration of space and achievement in medicine.*

If we recognize these aspects of conflict situations, we may learn to emphasize progress rather than resolution of conflict, viewing its presence as an expected, on-going process. In that process we may better clarify relevant issues as we test the validity of differing viewpoints. While confrontations are potentially quite dangerous, as exemplified by the Berlin crises of the Truman and Kennedy administrations, and the Cuban missile crisis of Kennedy's, they may significantly alter management for the better. Witness the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the

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*The manner in which this latter effort in the applied sciences, with burgeoning government support of research, may simultaneously undermine freedom of thought and scientific endeavor is a related but separate matter. It illustrates for the educator the complexity of the dilemmas (i.e., conflict-laden choices) confronting us all.

treaty banning use of nuclear weapons in outer space. The tension generated by international conflict and experienced so vividly in the "Cold War" of the past twenty years must be an expected condition of life, unless better means for dealing with conflict can be devised. A more thoroughgoing discussion of the creative conduct and management of conflict will be undertaken by Joan Bondurant later in the workshop.

Earlier, we referred briefly to several aspects of the learning experience which seem particularly relevant to the development of solid conviction, freedom for creative endeavor, and involvement in the problems of society including those of war and peace. They hinge primarily upon the development in the student of an accepting self-awareness, the capacity to recognize and tolerate conflicting elements in concepts or problems, and a sense of relatedness or involvement in an experiential way with the subject studied. For their achievement, adequate models for identification, including that presented by the teacher, are necessary. Although grossly oversimplifying the complexity of factors influencing learning, these may serve as guidelines for evaluating teaching about war/peace problems.

The informed teacher, approaching his students with assurance, both aware of the student's general fund of knowledge and sensitive to his psychological state of readiness, can provide many opportunities for exploration of these problems. How eager for understanding their relationships and the world about them are second-graders, these seven and eight year olds newly conceptualizing their view of every aspect of their lives, with the tool for mastery provided by reading! How riddled with conflict the nine to eleven year old, so long considered in the quietly serene period of latency, about his awareness of his individual goals

and impulses, constrained by limited physical and material resources for mastery and independence! And how gratefully eager, the confused adolescent for direct, respectful, and honest interaction with adults. The adolescent must know his teacher has acceptance of his fierce need for independent thought in spite of his limited experience. He must find an outlet for his conflict-ridden response to authority while remaining in need of firm external controls.

Even very young children can recognize the personal evocation of power implicit in "my daddy can beat up your daddy." He recognizes the importance of possession, of envy, fear, and anger in situations at play and at school. He is aware of competitive achievement, singly and between groups or classrooms. With complexity increasing as age and ego integration permit, he may be helped to recognize the psychological as well as other considerations influencing large scale conflict. He may be helped to recognize alternatives to violence in the settlement of disputes, whether the lesson grows out of events at school, current news, or the events of history. When competitive spirit and the need for mastery demands physical outlet, its relationship to organized sporting events or a "tug-of-war" can demonstrate limited violence indulged by the rules of the game.

Margaret Mead writing on "Violence in the Perspective of Cultural History"[20] cites various societies in which violence has been culturally acceptable only in restricted, highly ritualized and symbolic ways. Examples are the Balinese and the Hindus of India, in whose societies widespread violence erupted under conditions of sudden social change. Mead stresses that young males need more than symbolic ways in which to prove their own manhood <u>to themselves</u> through confidence in body skills.

She writes:

> In a world in which warfare is no longer a possibility and in which a willingness to die in war--some time in the future--cannot be substituted for a contemporary self-reassurance of adequacy and bravery, we shall need better, not less good, forms of rigorous and precise physical activity for young men. The problem here is not one of providing substitutes for the destructive violence of war; instead the problem is that of providing young men with the sense of mastery over and trust in their own bodies which is such an important component in their achievement of identity--of which war was once a supreme test (or, for which it was sometimes a substitute).

Charles M. Pierce, professor of psychiatry at the University of Oklahoma, has written recently on "Violence and National Character."[21] He points out that in our extremely competitive society, women have increasing power in social, economic, and political life. As a result the need among males for opportunities to demonstrate and proclaim male adequacy may be increased. Pierce attributes our particular national enjoyment of football to the fact that this game offers American males an almost universal outlet for the expression of controlled aggression and symbolic violence, both by direct participation and by identification with familiar persons.

The Olympic Games provide an international arena for demonstration of physical mastery. Mead has also emphasized the importance of our space exploration program in serving a similar function. In each of these examples team effort becomes as important as individual skill. The excitement and adventure represented by the violent heroes of folk lore, whether cowboys, soldiers, or spacemen, will continue to be absorbing to young boys. The battle histories of recent and ancient wars will continue to be exciting food for their fantasy. In each may be seen the child's

further search for mastery through idealized models for identification discussed in the workshop by Dr. Goldman.

In the article mentioned above, Mead points to our limited knowledge of ways in which non-violent behavior is enjoined upon learning individuals in their over-all educational (life) experience. She delineates the need for precise and discriminating teaching about violence. Her concern seems to be that harsh prohibitions about unacceptable violent behavior (inappropriate killing of animals, hurting others, etc.) may lay the groundwork for later murderous violence.

We suggest that the latter may occur when not only outlets for the physical expressions of aggression are forbidden, but when the concomitant need for the child to learn acceptance of feelings of rage and destructive aggressive wishes is not met. Internalized controls upon violent behavior are then not achieved. When external social controls are removed, or destroyed by social upheaval, chaotic violence may follow. Such a dynamic may play a significant role in current racial violence in the United States.

Those learning experiences related to the acquisition of self-confidence and a sense of identity must be distinguished from the social goals of success and power. To teach that total power must be equated with totalitarianism, and/or a potential for total destruction, will continue for some time to be resisted vigorously by conservative sectors in our society. Conversely, to educate young Americans to accept as legitimate goals those of limited success and limited power becomes enormously difficult. So much in our present American culture, and in the direct learning of our children, embodies the principle of the competitive spirit aimed at total success! Coupled with this is the widespread regard of

any compromise of views geared to current realities as weak and unmasculine, if not subversive and "communistic." Altering these widespread attitudes may be possible only by a process in which we succeed in helping youngsters to more fully achieve a sense of personal mastery, and to identify the complexity of conflict situations in their own lives.

While younger children may more readily identify their own emotional involvement in controversy, or the conflicting demands within a given situation, this becomes increasingly less true as they approach adolescence. This has its basis in part upon the role of repression as a defense against anxiety increasing after the age of 6 to 8 years. It is also a factor of the experience, widespread in our society, that one learns that to show feelings generally is "bad" or weak. For still more of us, to acknowledge feelings of uncertainty, insecurity, and indecision is particularly reprehensible.

Generally there will be some youngsters in every group more ready to acknowledge their own feelings and to be perceptive about the emotional effects of conflict. It is with these youngsters, and by his own feelings appropriately shared in example, that the teacher can best demonstrate acceptance of conflicted feelings, divergent views, and the derivatives of conflict in responsive behavior. Implicit in such openness and involvement by the teacher will be an expectation conveyed to his students. One learns the lesson early in the clinical practice of child psychiatry that children generally perform in response to the expectations of significant adults. This applies especially to those messages conveyed nonverbally and often unconsciously.

However, it is possible to cite examples specifically from investigations in the field of education to support this thesis. Kenneth B.

Clark in his book, Dark Ghetto, describes the effects of a pilot program in a Harlem junior high school.[22] The primary ingredient for change was a serious effort with school personnel to implement the belief that deprived and disadvantaged children could learn. Affirmative attitudes among teachers and in educational efforts replaced formerly negative and hopeless ones, with dramatic improvement in all measures of learning.

By teaching about the multiple factors impinging upon conflict situations, we may encourage greater awareness of their complexity and enhance the capacity of youngsters for developing independent judgment. There must be numerous opportunities in the classroom providing stimuli for the exploration of conflict. These may arise from current news events, a classroom visitor, incident on a field trip, or special study projects. The variety of reactions within the classroom group may provide additional dimensions to group involvement. As an example, an understanding of the city riots of 1967 requires knowledge in perspective of negro history and that of race relations. Equally relevant are present socio-economic factors. There may be consideration of the tension level in the conflict situation, and its relationship to the outbreak of violence. This then provides an opportunity for exploration of attitudes about conflict, violence, justice, social change, and gradually changing political attitudes and responses. Or one might discuss previously successful non-violent conduct of conflict, as in the Montgomery bus boycott by Martin Luther King and his followers. It becomes a narrow jump to consider those historical, cultural, socio-economic, psychological, political, and military considerations which bring mutually distrustful participants in international conflict situations to a confrontation, each with differing aims.

Demonstrating through classroom situations the creative uses of conflict will also be possible. Do not classroom groups become more cohesive when threatened by competition with other classes? Can it be demonstrated to the class that their own intra-group conflict becomes insignificant or denied in the presence of such threat to the group? Surely opportunities for debate will demonstrate the vigorous contact prompted by active conflict. It may further offer a chance to notice how in its course there has been an exploration of available alternative views, or areas of agreement in support of viable goals.

Regular questioning by the teacher in classroom discussions of resort to violence as a means for dealing with conflict may represent for many children the first encounter with such a point of view, except in the context of admonishing or thwarting prohibition against specific behavior and/or feelings at home. Repeated experience in a classroom atmosphere in which conflict can be more freely recognized, dilemmas as to course of action considered, and factors in group response observed, may serve to help such a youngster to tolerate ambivalent attitudes in himself. He may in this way gain group support in partially relinquishing a constricting defense posture learned earlier. The freedom to acknowledge, to tolerate the tension of, and to engage actively in recognized conflict situations provides each individual with a personal point of reference in understanding conflict management at a more abstract level.

Most vivid among those creative opportunities for educators concerned with teaching about conflict management are those situations which directly confront the teacher with the crossfire of emotions lit by active conflict. Benjamin DeMott writing in the Saturday Review, January 20, 1968 describes his "Encounter in Mississippi."[23] DeMott, an outstanding

teacher from the northeastern United States, beautifully describes his experience teaching Negro youth in the South. He brings to life the sparks generated by his own readiness to become involved, by his demand for honesty and self-awareness on the part of his students, and by accepting the hostility uncovered in pursuit of that honesty. DeMott describes teaching about conflict, pursued creatively.

If man is to give up war as an institution, he will need social mechanisms presently undeveloped and an organizational framework for their implementation. Among these must clearly be effective controls upon behavior in the continuing presence of conflict. These controls may be taught at the level of attitudes for acculturization and implemented by a system of world law, for example. Furthermore, mankind must develop mechanisms for more facile and accurate communication about himself and others, as well as greater awareness of those influences upon his own perception of alien attitudes, alluded to earlier in this presentation. Cultural exchange programs, correspondence with foreign students, and study projects, in depth, of alien societies are obviously aimed in this direction.

From the foregoing, it is apparent that a basis for many of the suggestions for educators growing from a study of conflict already exist in our school programs. Certainly individual, informed and excellent teachers are aware of many of the issues presented here and have found ways to begin to teach more effectively about the complex problem of achieving a world free of armed conflict. It is hoped that some of the ideas reviewed today will stimulate your thinking about establishing criteria for a curriculum more widely applicable.

We have suggested that you teach the concept of a world in which conflict, but not inevitably war, will continue to exist--that the conduct of conflict should be regarded as a necessary on-going process, while war can no longer be accepted by society.

We have suggested that you seek for yourself and teach young people to identify conflict situations at all levels in life experience. In that way each may learn to note the effect of conflict upon his own and the group's behavior. The complexity of the dilemmas involved in conflict management may then be better recognized. Limited success and limited power may become more accepted achievements.

We have suggested you teach that alternatives to violence are available as the outcome of conflict situations; furthermore, to note that distinction between destructive violence and the expression of the need for physical mastery which is part of each person's search for identity.

We have suggested that you teach the creative functions of conflict as a force in the lives of individuals and society.

Finally, we have suggested that you teach of the need within the structure of society for new institutions for the conduct of conflict and control of violence.

It is impossible to conclude a discussion of teaching about conflict as it relates to problems of war without acknowledgment of certain hindrances to the teaching process. Foremost may be the teachers' sense of urgency when the effort involved must remain a long-term one sustained in spite of discouragement. Not least among the discouraging aspects of the task will be the controversy aroused within communities as these concepts are taught. Few of us can face such controversy without appre-

ciable anxiety and self-doubt. We will encounter that socio-cultural "militant enthusiasm" that equates patriotism with a stance we may recognize as untenable.

We may finally be tempted to join our students in wishing for concrete short-term answers, rather than long-term effort fraught with multiple dilemmas. We may find the complexity of the issues, the conflict of views, and the elusive definition of vantage point all contributing to a mounting sense of futility. We may find threatening in itself, the anxiety aroused in our students by the confrontation with these issues.

In closing, we quote in part a statement from Psychiatric Aspects of the Prevention of Nuclear War:

> There are those who will argue that to consider such non-violent alternatives represents 'lack of realism,' 'starry-eyed idealism,' and 'lack of faith in the strength of our system.' It seems to us, on the contrary, that the weight of evidence is that persons who continue to think in terms of military victory are reflecting precisely those attitudes. With the incredibly enormous nuclear destructive capacity that now exists on both sides in the East-West struggles, it is quite unrealistic to assume that either side can achieve traditional military victory....It would seem to be the most starry-eyed idealism to assume that if a nuclear war is fought, 'our way of life' would be preserved for the tragic survivors of such a holocaust. And, finally, it seems to us that it represents a serious lack of faith in the strength and vitality of our democratic society to assume that we would not or could not survive in peaceful competition with the Communist countries.....[24]

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16. Ibid., p. 247.

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*18. Portia B. Hume and Joan V. Bondurant, "The Significance of Unasked Questions in the Study of Conflict," Inquiry, Vol. 7 (1964), p. 318.

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